

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-05 INR-10 L-03 ACDA-12
NSAE-00 PA-01 SS-15 SP-02 ICA-11 TRSE-00 DODE-00
H-01 NSC-05 OMB-01 IO-13 /092 W
-----054723 141627Z /43

P R 141605Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2803
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY LONDON
USMISSION USNATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L THE HAGUE 3266

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: EFIN MPOL NATO NL
SUBJECT: THREE PERCENT DEFENSE RISE APPROVED

REF: (A) THE HAGUE 3024, (B) THE HAGUE 2910

1. THE SECOND CHAMBER DEFEATED ON JUNE 13 A MOTION CALLING ON THE GOVERNMENT TO REVERSE ITS DECISION TO INCREASE DEFENSE SPENDING BY THREE PERCENT. THE GOVERNMENT HAS THUS WON PARLIAMENTARY SUPPORT FOR ITS DECISION, ALTHOUGH IT HAD BEEN CRITICIZED BY LABOR AND OTHER OPPOSITION MEMBERS IN THE SECOND CHAMBER FOR HAVING ANNOUNCED THE INCREASE ON THE EVE OF THE NATO SUMMIT IN WASHINGTON IN ORDER TO AVOID A PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE. (UNDER THE PREVIOUS DEN UYL GOVERNMENT, DEFENSE SPENDING HAD BEEN PROJECTED TO INCREASE AT SLIGHTLY MORE THAN TWO PERCENT.)

2. THIS IS THE SECOND TIME IN RECENT WEEKS THAT THE VAN AGT CABINET HAS RECEIVED PARLIAMENTARY SUPPORT ON AN IMPORTANT DEFENSE ISSUE (THE OTHER WAS THE MAY DECISION ON THE NUCLEAR ROLE FOR THE LANCE MISSILE). HOWEVER, THE SUPPORT IS VARIED
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AT THE EDGES AND CANNOT NECESSARILY BE COUNTED ON TO APPROVE ADDITIONAL MEASURES IN SUPPORT OF NATO OBJECTIVES. IN THE LANCE VOTE (REF B), THREE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS CROSSED OVER TO VOTE WITH THE OPPOSITION AND THE VOTE CARRIED BECAUSE OF SUPPORT FROM THE SMALLER CONSERVATIVE PARTIES.

3. THE MOTION, WHICH WAS SUBMITTED BY FORMER DEFENSE MINISTER

STEMERDINK, RECEIVED LABOR PARTY BACKING, WITH THE EXCEPTION
OF FORMER MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS VAN DER STOEL. THIS
COURAGEOUS STAND BY VAN DER STOEL REENFORCES AGAIN HIS POSITION
AS AN ATLANTICIST (SEE THE HAGUE 2193) AND PLACES HIM MORE
THAN EVER AT ODDS WITH HIS PARTY.
BROWN

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NNN

Message Attributes

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